



One University. One World. Yours.

Halifax, Nova Scotia,
Canada
B3H 3C3
Senate Office
Tel: 902-420-5412

SPECIAL SENATE MEETING MINUTES March 2, 2021

The 623RD Meeting of the Senate of Saint Mary's University was held on Tuesday, March 2, 2021, at 4:00 PM, via Zoom. Dr Takseva Chairperson presided.

PRESENT: Dr Summerby-Murray, Dr Butler, Dr Bhabra, Dr Francis, Dr VanderPlaat, Dr Sarty, Dr Austin, Dr Bannerjee, Dr Brosseau, Dr De Fuentes Dr Grandy, Dr Grek-Martin, Dr Hanley, Dr O'Brien, Dr Panasian, Dr Power, Dr Stinson, Dr Takseva, Mr Brophy, Ms Killam, Ms van den Hoogen, Mr de Chastelain, Mr Zokari, Dr Smith, Ms Milton, Ms Sergeant-Greenwood, Mr Rooney, Ms Benoit, Ms Ulbrich, and Ms Bell, Secretary to the Office of Senate.

REGRETS: Dr Collins, Dr Hart, Dr Twohig, Ms Nankani, Mr Tumusiime, and Ms Winters.

Meeting commenced at 4:01 P.M.

21077 **REPORT OF AGENDA COMMITTEE**

The last item is being reordered to the beginning of the agenda. There being no objections, the Senate Agenda was approved as revised.

21078 **UNIVERSITY BUDGET PRESENTATION** - D. Rooney and M. Benoit

- This meeting was necessary due to the overlap between Senate and the Board of Governors meetings. This special meeting provides the opportunity for feedback from the Senate prior to approval of the budget at the Board level.
- Members were advised that the Chair of Senate met with the Board of Governors to discuss the resource issues arising from Program Reviews.
- The University Budget for 2020-2021 was presented by Mr Rooney, Ms Benoit and Ms Ulbrich:

Questions:

- Question: Many of our programs rely heavily on part-time faculty. Many of our programs need new FT faculty positions (as evidenced by the results of program reviews). Creating new streams or academic opportunities for new and existing students requires FT faculty. Is there a provision in this budget for new FT faculty positions? Answer: Through the Strategic Planning Process, there will be an opportunity to review the initiatives that support the overarching priorities and that will provide focus to where we want to direct our resources. We cannot do everything all at once.

- Senators were reminded about the business plan model that supports new program development. This is in place to address this issue and to address resource issues arising from program reviews.
- Questions: Slide 8 - Budget 2022 – There is no real increase in student enrolments for next year. Assuming there will be more people on campus and the related services income – does this budget imply there is no increase in student enrolments? Answer: Please note there are one time revenue numbers in there that do not repeat themselves. This budget line includes the amount received from the government even though it is part of next year’s budget. Funds were received from the province for deferred maintenance projects. There will be a gradual return to normal in terms of services. The graduate enrolment will increase but there is still a related degree of uncertainty. We have taken a very conservative approach to forecasting what may happen. We forecast strong domestic numbers in 2021.
- Question: There is also an increase in salaries/benefits for 2022 (from 2021). What is this for? Answer: There were some new positions approved by the EMG this year, but most were contract positions. These will be reviewed as time progresses to see whether those will be retained or not. The forecast is based on some positions being vacant during the year and some filled.
- What about the lag in vaccinations? How does the risk related to this weigh against the investment in growth? Answer: We should be out of this by spring of next year. We are investing in growth for the spring of the next academic year.
- Question: Department budgets have been constant for over a decade. Costs associated with a whole range of virtual activities this year, lab, and teaching space cleaning/PPE, for example, and going forward continue to come from department and research budgets which is not sustainable. Additionally, activities/courses/programs and new program development costs that were at advanced stages of planning were put on hold at the discretion of individual Deans and departments. These will incur more cost than a “restoration” of budgets going forward, at least for the coming 1-2 years. How have these aspects been considered in the budget planning? Answer: The fluidity of items was challenging in terms of setting the budget. Every three months, departments can submit a request for additional funds and those requests will be considered based on the revenues coming in. The more planning people can do related to when they need the funding the better the university will be able to respond to requirements. A new decentralized budget model will be developed beginning in April.
- One of the things that is being discussed is how we can provide more purposefully support courses in the spring, summer and fall terms to respond to and support the course requirements.
- Question: Who gets to see the breakdown of the salaries into faculty/staff/senior administration and how those proportions change over time? Answer: This would be the Finance Committee of the Board. We would have no issue in sharing that information.
- Question: Could this information sharing be part of the Board AGM? Answer: That would be up to the Board. The President advised that the University could find a way to make that information available.

21079

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

- a) Curriculum Committee,
Submissions from Modern Languages & Classics (missing (in error) from Dec report), *Appendix A*

Key Discussion Highlights:

- An error occurred in the December 2020 Faculty of Arts Curriculum Report to Senate. The section containing the tables for the revisions

submitted by Modern Languages & Classics was missing approved material. It is being submitted today as Appendix A for this meeting.

- Question: There were three courses eliminated but seven new courses created. Are there resource concerns? Answer: This was addressed by the Arts Curriculum Committee and these changes were endorsed by the Arts Executive and approved by the Arts Faculty Council. Some of the courses are not new courses but are heavily modified courses.

Moved by Grandy and seconded, **“that Senate approve the curriculum revisions in Appendix A for insertion into the 2021-2022 Academic Calendar.” Motion carried.**

21080

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 4:58 P.M.

Barb Bell,
Secretary of Senate